

Mill Tract Farm

HABS No. PA-1037

North side of Mill Road at the east bank of Limekiln Creek

1-1/3 miles northeast of Stonersville, Exeter Township
Stonersville Vicinity

Berks County

Pennsylvania

HABS
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

PA
6-20-11 V.V.
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MILL TRACT FARM

Location: North side of Mill Road at the east bank of Limekiln Creek, 1-1/3 miles northeast of Stonersville, Exeter Township, Stonersville Vicinity, Berks County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner: Walter M. Diener.

Present Occupant: Vacant.

Present Use: In process of being renovated for use as a residence.

Brief Statement of Significance: Excellent example of a large farmhouse of the mid eighteenth century, showing the architectural influence of the English settlers in Pennsylvania.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Although there is as yet no documentary evidence for the exact dating of the house, the land on which it was built had been in the Boone family for some time; and, according to deeds in the possession of the present owner, did not pass from the family ownership until after the house had been built. The original grant was made to George Boone, grandfather of Daniel Boone, and this particular parcel of land came down to Judah Boone.

The house was enlarged at least five times and perhaps more, judging from the changes in scale and color of the stone in the masonry and the shift in the wall alignments. The earliest part dates from about the middle of the eighteenth century and the latest probably from about the second decade of the nineteenth century.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The Boone house is a two-story stone house, generally L-shape in plan, with a gable roof and no dormers. The house is Georgian in character, and except for a small one-room extension on the north, presents a formal, balanced, five-bay facade.

The structure is basically sound, and repairs to the roof, chimneys, and walls have been made to protect the interior from weather damage.

The house is approximately fifty-six feet wide, and the L extends seventy feet in depth. The foundations and walls are stone. There was a pent roof across the west front between the first and second floor windows, as can be seen by the slightly projecting stone course and the remains of the rafters which supported it. There are five chimneys, the flues of which are brick and have been replaced from the roof up.

The front door is a six panel door, probably original, with a simple frame and a fourteen light transom above. The windows are double hung sash, some with nine over nine lights and some with nine over six lights. The shutters on the first floor are of two solid panels each, while those on the second floor are louvered.

The gable roof now has a metal roof. There is the usual coxed cornice with a classic cyma recta molding.

The basic floor plan is a central stair hall with one room on either side. The additional rooms extend to one side and the rear of this central block. This plan is repeated on the second floor. In all there are six rooms and a hall on each floor. There are three stairways, one in the central hall, one in the L wing, and one in a small room at the northeast corner of the house. It is difficult to tell just which is the oldest part of the house and the order in which the various additions were made, but the original part of the central block consisted of one room and hall, the second room having been added on the south at a later date.

The floors throughout are apparently original and are of wide boards. The walls are plastered and have chair rails and paneled wainscots in the more important rooms. The fireplace walls in the two west front rooms, and in the northeast room downstairs and in the southwest chamber of the second floor are completely paneled. These walls are in excellent condition and are fine examples of Georgian paneling.

The trim around the doors and windows is typical of the Georgian period. There is a great deal of the original hardware remaining, wrought iron H-L hinges, spring locks, box locks, and latches. There are no lighting fixtures in the house. Heating was by fireplaces, of which there are six.

The setting is a particularly picturesque one. The house sits on a rise, facing south overlooking a meadow and a brook. Below the house is a large mill, and beyond this the miller's house. To the east of the house and across the road are the barns. At the rear of the house, and extending from the angle made by the house, is a rectangular terrace partially enclosed by a low stone wall. At the diagonally opposite corner stands a stone privy.

Prepared by
Drury B. Alexander, Supervisor
Schuylkill Valley Project, Reading, Pa.
University of Pennsylvania for NPS
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